

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 MC-02

ACDA-05 AID-05 /068 R

DRAFTED BY EA/TB:FJTATU:LRR

APPROVED BY EA/TB: GEORGE B. ROBERTS

EA/RA-PMU - COL. BAILEY (DRAFT)

PM/MC - MR. WALSH (DRAFT)

EA/IMS - MR. DION (DRAFT)

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R 140021Z JUN 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

INFO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 139594

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILL, TH, BM,MY

SUBJECT: HAND GUN EXPORTS TO THAILAND

REF: A. STATE 218378; B. BANGKOK 16474 (OCTOBER'74)

1. THE CONTINUED LARGE VOLUME OF PERSONAL WEAPONS LICENSED FOR EXPORT TO THAILAND HAS AGAIN GENERATED CONCERN IN THE DEPARTMENT REGARDING THEIR ULTIMATE DISPOSITION. FOR THE PAST NINE MONTH PERIOD (OCTOBER TO DATE), 37,326 WEAPONS HAVE BEEN APPROVED FOR EXPORT (36,920 HAND GUNS, 174 RIFLES, 232 SHOTGUNS) TO COMMERCIAL OUTLETS IN THAILAND, AND 2,349 MORE ARE PENDING.

2. WHILE WE ARE AWARE OF THE THAI POPULAR ATTITUDE WHICH COMPELS MANY MALES TO CARRY ARMS, WE ARE ALSO AWARE OF THE
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LIVELY TRAFFIC IN HOME-MADE BUT FUNCTIONAL "ZIP" GUNS,

COMPARED TO WHICH HIGH-PRICED U.S.-MADE WEAPONS SEEM NEED-
LESSLY LUXURIOUS. THIS GENERATES THE SUPPOSITION THAT
MANY WEAPONS LICENSED FOR THAILAND ARE IN FACT DESTINED
FOR TRANSHIPMENT TO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, OF WHICH BURMA
OR PERHAPS MALAYSIA WOULD NOW BE THE MOST LOGICAL DESTINA-
TIONS. MUNITIONS CONTROL REGULATIONS SPECIFICALLY PROHIBIT
TRANSHIPMENT OF ARMAMENTS WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL.

3. WE WOULD APPRECIATE THE BENEFIT OF CURRENT EMBASSY
THINKING ON THIS MATTER AND SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW THE
QUESTION MIGHT BE INVESTIGATED OR MORE SPECIFICALLY
DEFINED. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMS, SALES, GUN CONTROL, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE139594
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: FJTATU:LRR
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750208-0170
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750649/aaaabryx.tel
Line Count: 73
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 218378, 75 BANGKOK 16474, 75 (OCTOBER'7
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUL 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <13 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HAND GUN EXPORTS TO THAILAND
TAGS: MILI, PORS, TH, BM, MY
To: BANGKOK
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006